

Clinic wraps up Community Health Center Week

FRANKLIN - The Teche Action Clinic finished National Community Health Center Week by giving thanks to those in government who help keep it going. The weeklong observance has been a practice of the National Association of Community Health Centers for years. It began this year for the clinic on Tuesday. "We use this opportunity to highlight the work that community health centers have done nationwide," Teche Action Clinic Chief Executive Officer Dr. Gary Wiltz said, "and in particular to thank and honor those people that have been instrumental in helping us move forward." The clinic gave commemorative plaques and a gift bag to several public officials serving St. Mary Parish on federal, state, parish and local levels. U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon represented the federal government. Wiltz thanked Melancon, D-Napoleonville, for his help in getting what the clinic needs. Melancon also spoke briefly on the state of health care in the New Orleans area nearly two years after Hurricane Katrina. "We had some frustrations from people in health care. It's all about the citizens is what it boils down to," Melancon said. "Since Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, where the health-care problems are the delivery of health care and also the concerns with psychiatric patients, it is a concern that ripples out. When it ripples out, it ripples out to the 3rd Congressional District." Overall recovery is still an issue that Melancon is tackling and he will be on hand as a delegation from Washington tours the Gulf Coast this week. "This Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Mrs. (Nancy) Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Mr. (James) Clyburn (D-S.C.) and about 15 other members from around the country will come in, Republican and Democrat. We're going to be visiting the New Orleans region and the Biloxi area to try and understand what's been done and what's not been done, what my leadership committed to and what we've done in respect to those commitments and what needs to be done there," Melancon said. The congressman said he and the majority party will try to send more money to Louisiana for storm recovery. In light of the week's observance Wiltz noted that the clinic, which is the oldest and possibly the largest community health center in the state, will soon go through some changes. Wiltz said the clinic will be renovated in the next few months. The entire complex will be renovated with the land in between the two buildings becoming a large waiting room. The money for the project will be from a Capital Outlay grant. "The money was supposed to be appropriated the week after Katrina. It got held up and now only recently we got the money moved where we can start spending. In the next few months you'll see a sign on the front saying that construction will be on the way," he said. Although the week is over, the Teche Action Clinic is still offering a chance for the community to support community health care centers. The clinic is sponsoring a National Health Care Week petition drive. The petition calls on Congress and the president to support health care center program. Teche Action Clinic executive assistant Alfreida Edwards said the goal of the nationwide petition is to secure 500,000 signatures. The clinic hopes to gather 5,000 locally before it is submitted on Sept. 15. Edwards said churches, families and other organizations are asked to sign and those who are not Teche Action Clinic patients are allowed to sign. Contact Edwards at 355-2317 or visit the office for more information or to sign the petition.

About the Author

From www.iberianet.com:

Cleveland Clinic Florida, Cleveland Clinic Florida. Cleveland Clinic Canada, Cleveland Clinic Canada. Health Information Center, Health.

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Aurora Health Care is a Wisconsin health care provider with Aurora hospitals, medical clinics, doctors.

Information for cat owners and veterinarians, including fact sheets covering several conditions.

This Web site provides the address and contact information for clinics that offer Primary Medical, Obstetrical and Gynecological, Dental, Mental.

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